

Cambridge University Press

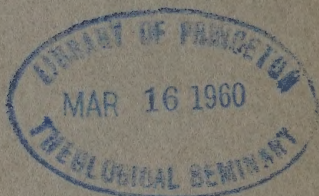
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Three Hundred Years  
of  
Printing the Bible  
1629-1929

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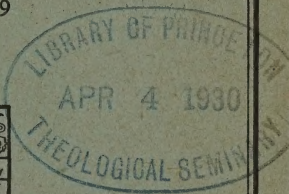
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THREE HUNDRED YEARS  
OF  
PRINTING THE BIBLE  
1629-1929



TO  
COMMEMORATE THE TERCENTENARY  
OF A.V. BIBLE PRINTING AT  
CAMBRIDGE

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THREE HUNDRED YEARS  
OF PRINTING THE BIBLE





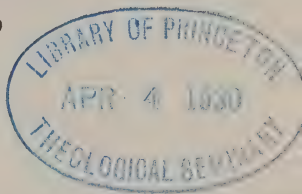




TITLE PAGE OF THE FIRST  
 CAMBRIDGE EDITION OF THE  
 AUTHORISED VERSION BIBLE

*Printed by Thomas and John Buck  
 in 1629*

300 YEARS  
OF PRINTING THE AUTHORISED  
VERSION OF THE HOLY BIBLE  
AT CAMBRIDGE  
1629-1929



✓  
Cambridge University Press



CAMBRIDGE  
AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS  
1929

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN

CAMBRIDGE had begun to print the Bible (in the Geneva Version) as early as the year 1588, under the charter granted to the University by King Henry VIII in 1534. That charter was the centre of many violent attacks, but under it Cambridge printing became so firmly established as to withstand the jealousy of the medieval London stationers and the dangers inseparable from the changing political and religious views of successive sovereigns.

The issue of the Authorised Version of the Holy Bible in 1611 was not immediately followed by the printing of this famous Version at Cambridge. For awhile Barker, the printer

to the King, was responsible for every copy printed, and his first folio edition of 1611 was looked upon as the only available standard of the text as it came from the Translators. But this first folio of 1611 was known to contain many serious misprints, some of which were corrected in the second folio edition of the same year; and in this second folio a number of fresh errors occurred. It became quite obvious as time went on that if the production of Bibles were left to a printer uncontrolled by any learned body, however excellent such printer might be from the purely technical point of view, the risk of degrading the work of the Translators would be very great. At Cambridge, therefore, steps were taken to collate the various issues and, with the aid of scholars of the



THE PRINTING HOUSE OF THOMAS BUCK

*At one time the refectory of the Augustinian friars*





University, some of whom had probably taken part in the actual work of the 1611 translation, to set up a new and authoritative standard of the Authorised Version of the Bible.

The charter of Henry VIII was ratified by King Charles I in 1628, and in the following year the first Authorised Version Bible printed by the Cambridge University Press was issued by Thomas and John Buck. The issue of this famous edition was resisted by the King's Printer; but it received a grateful welcome from those to whom accuracy was of more importance than commercial considerations. Not only was this edition welcomed for the purity of its text, but its appearance caused something of a price-war. For some time the price of Bibles had gradually risen, the cost of a folio, prior

to the appearance of the Cambridge edition, being 12s., equal to the value of about £5 in present sterling currency. But on the appearance of the Cambridge folio at 10s., the King's Printer sold a specially printed folio edition, and a thousand copies in quarto, at 5s. apiece "to overthrow the Cambridge printing and so to keep all in their own hands." However, the foundation of Cambridge Bible supremacy was too surely laid to suffer from any such opposition.

In 1630 Cambridge printed a handsome quarto in black letter and a quarto in roman letter, both of which had a ready sale. These were followed, in 1637, by a smaller, octavo, issue, which also found considerable favour, and in 1638 by a new folio edition.

In the 1638 folio the revision

of the text begun in that of 1629 was carried still further, the task being about equally shared between the two sets of editors. What the one left undone, the other in good measure supplied, by inserting words or clauses, especially in the Old Testament, overlooked by the editors of 1611, by amending manifest oversights, and by rendering the italic notation at once more self-consistent and more agreeable to the design of the original Translators. The influence of the 1638 folio on subsequent editions was undoubtedly very great, and it remained the standard of the Authorised Version until the publication of the Cambridge edition of 1762.

The Great Rebellion of 1642 left men neither inclination nor means for such costly under-

takings as the printing of fresh editions of the Bible. The office of King's Printer ceased with the monarchy, and Cambridge alone was left to carry on the work of Bible printing, for Oxford had not yet begun to print the Bible. During this disturbed period many Bibles were imported from Holland. These, on scrutiny by an Assembly of Divines, were found to be so full of errors that they were reported to the Parliament of 1643 as corrupt and dangerous to religion. Their importation was expressly forbidden by statute, and Cambridge for awhile had a virtual monopoly of Bible printing.

After the Restoration of the monarchy, began a movement for the advancement of Cambridge typography, in which the most prominent name is





RICHARD BENTLEY



that of Richard Bentley. New buildings, new presses, and new types were all required, and the University itself being destitute of funds, a subscription was set on foot and the deficiency made up by the Senate borrowing a thousand pounds. It was with the object of bringing the Press directly under the control of the University, and of making it still more worthy of Cambridge scholarship, that the movement associated with Bentley's name began. In 1698, a body of *Curatores* was appointed from members of the University, and the Press Syndicate, which at the present day represents the University in its printing and publishing capacity, is the direct successor of that body.

Early in the career of the new governing body a great advancement in the methods of

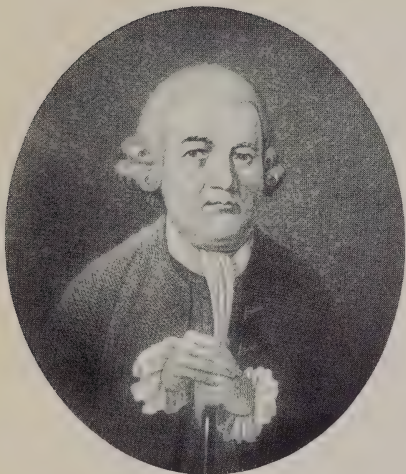
printing was foreshadowed. In 1730 William Fenner, a London stationer, brought up from Edinburgh a Scotsman named Ged who claimed to have discovered a method of casting from type whole pages of letters. As the invention was likely to be used with the most advantage for the printing of Bibles, Fenner applied to the University of Cambridge for a printer's licence, which was granted him on 23 April 1731. Much effort and expenditure of money, however, failed to make the invention a success, and it was abandoned, Fenner dying in debt in 1734.

It was in 1758 that the famous printer John Baskerville was appointed Cambridge University Printer. Originally a writing-master in Birmingham, Baskerville in 1750 be-

gan his experiments in type-founding. He set his mind to the improvement of type, press, paper, and method of printing. He wrote, in 1757, "It is not my desire to print many books, but such only as are books of Consequence, and which the public may be pleased to see in an elegant dress, and to purchase at such a price as will repay the extraordinary care and expense that must necessarily be bestowed upon them. . . . If this performance shall appear to persons of judgment and penetration in the Paper, Letter, Ink, and Workmanship to excel; I hope their approbation may contribute to procure for me what would indeed be the extent of my Ambition, a power to print an Octavo Common-Prayer Book, and a Folio Bible." The Prayer Book was produced by Baskerville

in 1760, the Bible in 1763. Although a failure from the commercial point of view, Baskerville's Bible and Prayer Book were recognised as something finer than any that had been produced before. Dibdin called the Bible "one of the most beautifully printed books in the world," and called attention to the title-page as having "all the power and brilliancy of copper-plate."

While improvement in the method and design of typography had continued to make great progress at Cambridge, advance in Biblical study had been drawing attention to deficiencies in the printed text of the Book itself. In 1762 Cambridge undertook yet a third revision, under the editorship of Dr Paris, Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge. Although



JOHN BASKERVILLE

*Cambridge University Printer*

1758-1763



Paris's edition is almost unknown to Biblical students (partly by reason of a large portion of the impression being destroyed by fire in the publisher's warehouse), it has contributed largely towards bringing the text, the marginal annotations, the italics, and the textual references, of modern Bibles into their present condition.

Early in the nineteenth century, Cambridge received another offer of a secret for the process of printing from stereotype plates. The inventor was the third Earl Stanhope, a remarkable man who, besides being prominent in politics, was a Fellow of the Royal Society, and the inventor of many devices, including improvements in the art of printing. The offer of the stereotype



secret came to the University from Andrew Wilson, the London printer employed by Earl Stanhope, and in 1807 the University definitely acquired the secret which so thoroughly changed the outlook of Bible printing. Hitherto, the type had of necessity to be set up anew every time a Bible was required to be reprinted. One edition might be of a high standard of typographical accuracy, but in a succeeding edition, for which the type would have to be reset, a continuity of that accuracy was by no means assured; for a less skilful generation of compositors and proof-readers might have come into being. It now became possible for a stereotype record of the type to be made, in the form of a solid page of letters, after the page of movable type had been





THE CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

*The Pitt Memorial Building*  
*erected 1831-1833*

brought to the highest pitch of accuracy. If any error were detected after a page plate had been cast, it was a matter of no great difficulty to make the necessary correction in the plate itself. Thus, accuracy once attained became permanent; misprints once corrected were disposed of for all time.

The appointment of John William Parker as University Printer in 1836 marked the beginning of the period of expansion and improvement which continues to the present day. By 1838 Parker could offer fifty-six different editions of the Bible and Prayer Book. Reductions in the cost of Bibles were also effected, and the Royal Commission of 1850-52 remarked upon the great reduction of price "attributed to improved machinery and to

better arrangements in the establishment."

In 1873 Cambridge issued the Cambridge Paragraph Bible, "being the Authorised Version with the text revised by a collation of the early and other principal editions, the use of italic type made uniform, the marginal references remodelled, and a critical introduction prefixed, by the Rev. F. H. A. Scrivener, M.A., D.C.L., LL.D." This was a successful attempt to give an exact reproduction of the original Authorised Version, minus patent mistakes. In the course of his editorial labours, Dr Scrivener made a detailed examination of the Cambridge standard copy of the Authorised Version Bible from which all Cambridge editions since 1858 had been set up. Close and repeated examination disclosed remarkably few

*errata* in the text or margins of that book which, amended in the light of Dr Scrivener's investigations, remains the standard of the Authorised Version text at Cambridge to the present day, and may be assumed to be as free from typographical error as human effort can provide.

Another interesting Bible, issued from Cambridge in 1909, is Dr Aldis Wright's reprint of the first edition of the Authorised Version of the Bible printed by Robert Barker in 1611. To this work is prefixed a list of variations between the two issues of 1611. Of these variations over seven hundred are mentioned.

The outbreak of war in 1914 interrupted all progress with new editions and resulted in the surrendering for munitions

of many valuable sets of printing plates of Bibles and other books. Immediately after the war a programme of new editions of the Authorised Version of the Bible was outlined, of which, up to the end of 1928, seven have been completed and placed on sale. The latest, and one of the most striking, is that known as the Turquoise type central column reference Bible. This edition, which is set in the type used for this present book, is designed to provide in the most portable form a Bible printed in very large clear type, with central column references. The design is somewhat unusual, in that the titles of the books of the Bible at the top of each page are not printed centrally but on the outer side of the page, in order to facilitate turning to any book required. Another feature is the



indication, by a system of diacritical marks, of the generally accepted pronunciation of certain proper names over which the reader is sometimes apt to stumble. This edition contains 1552 pages in size  $9\frac{1}{4}$  inches by 6; on Cambridge Bible paper the thickness is barely one inch and a quarter, on India paper one inch; and it is priced at 12s. upwards. It is the first Bible printed at Cambridge of which all the type, including the references, has been set up mechanically, and it marks a big advance in the reduction of the cost of producing a Bible with all the beauty and character of earlier editions. It is felt that in this book the Press has reached a standard of excellence which it will be very difficult indeed to surpass.

This, in brief outline, is an account of the 300 years' stewardship of the University of Cambridge in connection with the privilege, bestowed upon it by Henry VIII, to safeguard, print, and publish the Holy Scriptures.

CAMBRIDGE  
UNIVERSITY  
PRINTERS

- 1521 JOHN SIBERCH  
1534 NICHOLAS SPERYNG  
GARRETT GODFREY  
SEGAR NICHOLSON  
1539 NICHOLAS PILGRIM  
1540 RICHARD NOKE  
1546 PETER SHERES  
1577 JOHN KINGSTON  
1583 THOMAS THOMAS, M.A.  
1588 JOHN LEGATE  
? JOHN PORTER  
1606 CANTRELL LEGGE  
? THOMAS BROOKE, M.A.  
1622 LEONARD GREENE  
1625 { THOMAS BUCK, M.A.  
JOHN BUCK, M.A.  
1630 FRANCIS BUCK  
1632 ROGER DANIEL  
1650 JOHN LEGATE (the younger)  
1655 JOHN FIELD  
1669 MATTHEW WHINN  
1669 JOHN HAYES  
1680 JOHN PECK, M.A.

- 1682 HUGH MARTIN, M.A.  
 1683 JAMES JACKSON, M.D.  
 1683 JONATHAN PINDAR  
 1693 H. JENKES  
 1697 JONATHAN PINDAR  
 1705 CORNELIUS CROWNFIELD  
 1730 WILLIAM FENNER  
       MARY FENNER  
       THOMAS JAMES  
       JOHN JAMES  
 1740 JOSEPH BENTHAM  
 1758 JOHN BASKERVILLE  
 1766 JOHN ARCHDEACON  
 1793 JOHN BURGESS  
 1802 JOHN DEIGHTON  
 1802 RICHARD WATTS  
 [1804 ANDREW WILSON]  
 1809 JOHN SMITH  
 1836 JOHN WILLIAM PARKER  
 1854 GEORGE SEELEY  
 1854 { CHARLES JOHN CLAY, M.A.  
 1882 { JOHN CLAY, M.A.  
 1886 { CHARLES FELIX CLAY, M.A.  
 1916 JAMES BENNET PEACE, M.A.  
 1923 WALTER LEWIS, M.A.

*Cambridge: printed at the University Press*







PRINTED BY W. LEWIS, M.A.  
AT THE  
UNIVERSITY PRESS, CAMBRIDGE  
AND PUBLISHED BY  
THE CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS  
BIBLE DEPARTMENT  
FETTER LANE, LONDON, E.C. 4  
1929



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300 years of printing the Authorised

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